



## Fixed, Crystallising or Diverging: Attitude formation and change in the run-up to Brexit

*Red lines and compromises – what are the public's red lines in the Brexit negotiations and what are they prepared to compromise on?*

### Project Team:

- Prof Anthony Heath (Principle investigator), Dr Lindsay Richards (Co-investigator), and Dr Noah Carl (Postdoctoral researcher) [Centre for Social Investigation](#), Nuffield College, University of Oxford.
- Rob McNeil (Researcher and media liaison), [Migration Observatory](#), University of Oxford.
- [Kantar Public](#) (Data collection partner).

Research Award: ESRC award of £300,000 (part of their [UK in a Changing Europe](#) initiative)

Project Dates: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018

Summary: The project aims to monitor public attitudes towards key aspects of the Brexit negotiations as they evolve over the next eighteen months. The study will cover attitudes and expectations about the control of immigration, trade, borders, and sovereignty ('taking back control'), among other topics. We will investigate whether the public is willing to accept trade-offs between different elements of the negotiations, to what extent they feel that policy areas should be decided at national, supra-national or sub-national levels, and how public opinion differs across the UK and across different sections of the population. The drivers of opinion and opinion change, such as social identities (e.g. Brexiteer), and macro-economic developments (e.g. unemployment), will also be explored over the next 18 months drawing on a new online panel study.

### Key Objectives

- Timely evidence to policy-makers throughout the period of the Brexit negotiations on citizens' preferences, aspirations and expectations for key aspects of the negotiations
- In-depth understanding of the dynamics and drivers of these attitudes, aspirations and expectations
- Enhanced methodological understanding of the strengths and limitations of alternative methods of eliciting citizens' attitudes and expectations via internet and face-to-face techniques.

## About the Data

- Six waves of data to be collected via an online survey over 18 months
- Planned sample size of 5000 respondents per wave
- This is a panel study, which is to say we will go back to the same respondents each time to ask them some questions that are the same as the prior wave (to see if opinions are stable, fluctuating or evolving) as well as some new questions in each round
- We are designing questions with the specific intention of understanding willingness to make trade-offs, for which we will also design some survey experiments
- We expect some respondents to drop out each round, and they will be 'topped up' with fresh respondents so that we maintain a sample of around 5000 each time
- The sample will cover the whole of the UK (although we may be limited to a small sample size in Northern Ireland)

## Planned Outputs

- 1) Quarterly briefing notes throughout the duration of the project, aimed at policy makers
- 2) Regular workshops for policy-makers
- 3) A full research report aimed at policy makers
- 4) Academic articles in high-ranking journals such as the British Journal of Political Science on the dynamics of attitude change and the interplay between identities and expectations
- 5) An academic article on the reliability of internet panels in the study of attitudes to immigration.
- 6) Dissemination event to include academics and policy-makers, as well as a session aimed at the general public.
- 7) Dataset and documentation to be deposited on the UK data archive in order that it is accessible to the wider research community

## Timeline

| Phase                  | Detail                         | Target Completion Date          |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Project initiation     | Planning, hiring, etc.         | 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2017      |
| Data Collection Wave 1 | Full launch                    | 10 <sup>th</sup> July 2017      |
| Analysis               | First short report publication | 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2017 |
| Data collection Wave 2 | Full launch                    | 10 <sup>th</sup> October 2017   |
| Analysis               | Second report publication      | 10 <sup>th</sup> January 2018   |
| Data collection Wave 3 | Full launch                    | 10 <sup>th</sup> January 2018   |
| Dissemination event    | Location details TBD           | 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2018   |
| Analysis               | Third report publication       | 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2018     |
| Data collection Wave 4 | Full launch                    | 10 <sup>th</sup> April 2018     |
| Analysis               | Fourth report publication      | 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2018      |
| Data collection Wave 5 | Full launch                    | 10 <sup>th</sup> July 2018      |
| Analysis               | Fifth report publication       | 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2018 |
| Data collection Wave 6 | Full launch                    | 10 <sup>th</sup> October 2018   |
| Analysis               | Final full report              | 15 <sup>th</sup> December 2018  |
| Dissemination event    | Location details TBD           | 15 <sup>th</sup> December 2018  |